



*Witnessing the Movement of the Holy Spirit*



The Evangelical Covenant Church

ANNUAL REPORT | 2019



## *The Movement of the Holy Spirit*



## **A YEAR IN REVIEW**

**JOHN S. WENRICH | President**

### *Our Current Reality*

In the midst of the grief, loss, and uncertainty we have experienced because of Covid-19, as well as our revived recognition of longstanding systems of oppression and racism in the United States, we are clear about one thing: Jesus is Lord over all the earth, and our hope is in the risen Lord. Even as we lament all that we have lost, we look forward with the hope of the gospel to a new future.

In response to Covid-19, the Covenant has intentionally sought to shepherd people well and steward resources well. One way we worked to do that was by creating the Covenant Covid-19 Financial Relief Initiative to assist local churches, conferences, and camps; aid our global mission partners serving marginalized people around the world; and care for Covenant clergy. These missional relief grants have helped churches and global partners to unleash compassion in their communities in fresh ways. National Covenant Properties joined our collective efforts by lowering their monthly mortgage rates, bringing added relief to hundreds of churches.

When the heartbreaking news broke about the death of George Floyd, my spirit was burdened by the continued pervasion of racism across our nation. The Evangelical Covenant Church grieves George Floyd's death and laments the pandemic of systemic racism that has been allowed to fester and grow not only across our nation, but also in too many churches. We will not continue to ignore this virus.

In response, we created a solidarity statement signed by many Covenant leaders, affirming that while racial inequality persists in our world today, the Evangelical Covenant Church takes seriously our call to practice solidarity with all who are vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed.

It is our desire to link arms with our brothers and sisters to reflect how precious each person is in God's sight, and we trust Jesus Christ to guide us as we seek to humbly listen and respond. This is a moment where the Church is called to stand strong together.

### *Innovative Ministry*

The Covenant Church is a creative church. Almost overnight, many churches went from on-site to online.

**EACH YEAR  
THROUGH OUR  
ANNUAL REPORT,  
WE PAUSE TO  
ACKNOWLEDGE  
GOD'S WORK  
IN OUR MIDST.**



65 CHURCHES ACROSS 9 CONFERENCES  
ARE INVOLVED IN CRESCENDO  
**BOOMERS AND BEYOND MISSIONAL DISCIPLESHIP**

40 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE FIRST COHORT  
OF NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY'S  
SCHOOL OF RESTORATIVE ARTS AT  
STATEVILLE CORRECTIONAL CENTER.  
**7 CONTRIBUTED TO THE  
2020 WEEK OF PRAYER RESOURCE**



**59 ACTIVE CHURCH PLANTS**

**60% ARE BEING PLANTED  
BY PEOPLE OF COLOR**

**27% HAVE A WOMAN  
AS LEAD OR CO-LEAD**

In some cases, attendance quadrupled. Electronic giving became the norm, not the exception, as digital became the new default. As we consider how to re-open our churches, we lament what was lost and look ahead to new opportunities. Churches that see themselves as startups will thrive in the new world. Ray Johnston, pastor of Bayside Covenant Church in Granite Bay, California, put it this way, "We marry our mission, but we date our methods." While I am praying for the Covid-19 curve to flatten, I am also praying for the innovation curve to rise.

Over the last few months, I have come to know Susan Cosio, the chair of the Covenant Chaplains Association. Together, we co-lead a call with 50-60 Covenant chaplains every two weeks. I have learned that our sisters and brothers who are first responders are some of the most courageous and compassionate clergy I have ever met.

In response to Covid-19, for the first time in 135 years, the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church was canceled. We were disappointed and saddened not to enjoy the company of mission friends gathered together. But that does not preclude the opportunity to celebrate how the Spirit of the living God is moving in our midst. As we join God in God's mission to see more disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world, I continue to be in awe of this corner of the kingdom called the Covenant. We have proved we can do more together than we can separately.

I am praying for a global revival, a great awakening. The Holy Spirit, the Blazing Center of our mission, empowers the church and awakens our hearts to proclaim and demonstrate the whole gospel. We do not lose hope or shrink back in fear. As the Scottish Olympian runner and missionary

Eric Liddell wrote, "Circumstances may appear to wreck our lives and God's plans, but God is not helpless among the ruins."

### ***Praising God for Where We Have Been***

Our ability to quickly pivot and position ourselves for this present reality and future challenges is a testimony to what God has been doing for years in the life of ECC.

After crossing the Jordan, Joshua instructed the Israelites to collect twelve stones so that generations would remember God's provision and "all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God" (JOSHUA 4:24). This stopping to remember is a practice we continue each year through our Annual Report, as we pause to acknowledge God's work in our midst.

Our mission is to join God in God's mission to see more disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world. A myriad of ministry stories and statistics communicate how we are accomplishing our mission, but I will highlight only a few.

Together this year, we planted 21 churches. More people come to know and follow Jesus through church planting than by any other means. Churches planting churches is the leading indicator of a denomination's health and growth, so we will continue to emphasize church planting as our core strategy.

In the past year we made significant progress in advancing the mission through the multiethnic mosaic of churches of which we are all a part. I am grateful for the influence and ministry of the Mosaic Commission (formerly the Ethnic Commission). We are now blessed with four ethnic associations: African American Ministers Association (AAMA), Asociación Latina de la Iglesia del Pacto



**2,650 COVENANTERS PARTICIPATED  
IN RACIAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND  
RECONCILIATION EXPERIENCES**

**350 PARTICIPANTS ACROSS NORTH AMERICA TRAINED  
THROUGH AVA (ADVOCACY FOR VICTIMS OF ABUSE)  
MINISTRY TO ADDRESS SEXUAL ASSAULT**



**CARING FOR 2,591 COVENANT MINISTERS**

**\$94,306 WAS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH  
MINISTERS' CARE AND CRISIS FUND  
FOR SUPPORT AND CARE OF PASTORS**



**GLOBAL PERSONNEL SERVING IN  
59 COUNTRIES IN FIVE REGIONS  
(ASIA, AFRICA, EUROPE, LATIN AMERICA, MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA)**

**57,234 PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF GEMENA,  
DR CONGO, HAVE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER**

Evangélico (ALIPE), Covenant Asian Pastors Association (CAPA), and the newly formed Indigenous Ministers Association (IMA).

The Six-Fold Multiethnic Ministry Test is gaining traction throughout the Covenant as we work toward reflecting the full mosaic of God's kingdom, and I continue to learn and grow through my own education, shared experiences, and deep relationships. This past year I took the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and met with a coach who reviewed the results and walked me through a growth plan. I am striving to continue my education—especially in this area—since it has been said that leaders are learners and when the leader stops learning, the movement stops growing.

At their best, institutions shape people for “lives of significance and service” (borrowing a line from North Park University). For all the ways the Covenant has shaped me, the multiethnic mosaic and the Six-fold Test are the most profound. I know we have a long way to go. But let's remember to pause and celebrate. Let us live into our identity as a kingdom people. It bears repeating that we are not a denomination with multiethnic ministries—we are a multiethnic denomination.

Another joy is working with godly and gifted sisters and brothers. Proverbs 27:17 says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” Whether it's the Covenant Executive Board, colleagues at Covenant Offices, conference personnel, pastors, or lay leaders, I cannot imagine ministry without dynamic

and life-giving relationships. I am reminded of what theologian Dallas Willard prayed: “That you would have a rich life of joy and power, abundant in supernatural results, with a constant, clear vision of never-ending life in God's world before you, and of everlasting significance of your work day by day.” I feel that, thanks to my sisters and brothers.

There are so many other ministry highlights I could mention: clean water in Congo, Crescendo, the sale of Swedish Covenant Hospital, Embrace, the Blazing Center resource suite, Sankofa, 30 for 30, and our care for our pastors. None of this could happen without the generous support of churches and donors. I praise God for our partnership in the gospel.

I will greatly miss our Covenant annual gathering, but I am no less thankful for the opportunity to serve as your president. Humbled and honored, I pray that God, in his mercy and providence, will bring us together for Gather 2021.

“Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

For God's glory and neighbor's good,

John S. Wenrich  
PRESIDENT, EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

**CIRCUMSTANCES MAY APPEAR  
TO WRECK OUR LIVES AND GOD'S  
PLANS, BUT GOD IS NOT HELPLESS  
AMONG THE RUINS.**

*Eric Liddell*





## OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

ANGELA YEE | Chief Ministry Officer

**W**e know the Holy Spirit is present and actively moving throughout the Covenant Church. Lives are being saved and communities are experiencing transformation. This has deepened my appreciation for our Covenant family, and I am grateful to use my gifts, as August Hermann Francke stated, for "God's glory and neighbor's good."

In the 20 months I have been serving as chief ministry officer, working alongside President John Wenrich on key strategic components of Covenant mission, I've had the privilege to be in community with the ECC's diverse leadership from our 11 regions, to facilitate capacity-building engagements at some of our local churches, to learn the heart of our executive ministers and the interworking of their mission areas, and to deepen relationships with Covenanters involved in key events and initiatives.

To build upon our legacy of effective mission and ministry efforts as we steer toward the future, my engagements include:

- **FACILITATING STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS** of Covenant collaborative missional efforts to address both current needs and opportunities for the future.
- **CULTIVATING AND NURTURING POTENTIAL FUTURE ECC LEADERS** through 30 for 30, an immersion cohort experience providing a stimulating environment for young Covenant leaders to be stretched in their abilities and to grow spiritually.
- **LEADING A YEARLONG, CULTURE-SHAPING PROCESS** to help the team at Covenant Offices to clarify our purpose and position for greater ministry effectiveness in the future.
- **FORMALIZING A MANAGEMENT TEAM STRUCTURE** to aid the president in responding effectively to the expectations of staff and constituents.



**FOR  
"GOD'S GLORY  
AND  
NEIGHBOR'S  
GOOD."**

August Hermann Francke



- **FACILITATING POST COVID-19 PLANNING** to assess future responsiveness and sustainability. The outcomes of this process led the way for the Covenant Executive Board to develop a Location Advisory Committee and launch a discernment process to further integrate our efforts and solidify a viable infrastructure for the benefit of our shared future.
- **BUILDING AN ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM** for the president's office to better respond to the needs of the whole church and help produce life-giving Covenant events for generations to come.



A young girl was learning about the treatment of slaves and Native Americans through the Justice Journey for Kids curriculum. Her pastor shared that she responded by saying, “You know, I bet all of this makes God sad because if we’re made in God’s image, then we’re really hurting God AND others.”

Justice Journey is a collaborative effort between Make and Deepen Disciples and Love Mercy Do Justice that uses age-appropriate material to help the next generation celebrate the diversity of God’s kingdom and be empowered by the Spirit and love of Christ to overcome the injustice inherent in our broken world. Churches using the curriculum say they are excited to see the impact it is having on children in their church.

Another pastor said his multiethnic and multi-racial church had struggled to find resources to teach children how they could participate in biblical justice. He says Justice Journey for Kids helped their children see “the inherent beauty of all people and cultures. Their imaginations are being shaped in Christlike ways that move them beyond color-blindness, acceptance, and simply being nice to others—into a holistic understanding of the gospel.”

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through MDD*

We see the Holy Spirit helping people to better understand God’s grace to everyone and that everyone can minister within God’s kingdom.

“Reconciling Grace” is our Week of Prayer resource that featured reflections from students in North Park Theological Seminary’s School of Restorative Arts program who are incarcerated at Stateville Correctional Center. Their work has inspired churches to see those who are incarcerated as real people who experience grace and have much to teach us about how we live out our faith.

More children are coming to faith and being empowered to live out their faith as the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of adults to see how children can be full participants in the life of the church today through Legacy. Legacy brings together church and children’s ministry leaders to assess, dream, and develop plans for enriching their ministry. It also offers coaching, resources, and helps the church to celebrate how the church’s life has been enriched.



SEEING THOSE WHO ARE  
INCARCERATED AS REAL PEOPLE  
WHO EXPERIENCE GRACE AND HAVE  
MUCH TO TEACH US ABOUT HOW  
WE LIVE OUT OUR FAITH

(above) Marcos Ramirez, a student in North Park’s School of Restorative Arts, contributed to MDD’s Week of Prayer resource.



Justice Journey for Kids

Youth workers across the entire ECC have done an incredible job of caring for the younger generation of Covenanters during the Covid-19 pandemic. They have led the church in developing creative ways for youth to connect even during “shelter in place.”

The Blazing Center resource suite is developed around the Covenant’s affirmation of our conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit. It includes extensive downloadable, multi-media materials to empower each local church to carry the message of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

**MDD VISION STATEMENT:** Our dream is to mobilize a multiethnic movement of disciples who make disciples across all ages.

**PLEASE PRAY THAT** God does exceedingly more than we can ever ask or imagine as thousands of youth from all across the ECC come together for the Unite conference in 2022 (formerly CHIC). At Unite we see the best of the ECC lived out—the mosaic of the church family shines, teenagers commit their lives to Christ and learn the value of deepening in their own discipleship. It is all done in partnership with the local church, as we follow the Spirit’s lead and give all glory to Christ.

We also pray that the BLESS journal may be a resource to inspire people as to how they can bless others.







**A**manda Sadlier and her husband, Dan, planted Mosaic Roosevelt Island Church in New York City in 2013. Last January, they launched Mosaic Queens Church in Queens, and they are now launching a Spanish-speaking congregation. Part of the key to their success has been coaching—by someone who isn't a church planter.

In 2019, Start and Strengthen Churches trained 132 people to be coaches, most of whom had never been church planters. The coaches received training in intensive sessions that spanned several days.

"There's a little mix of consulting, but basically they're asking questions that take me to a place where I can discover things for myself," Amanda says. "It's very empowering. It's not, 'You should do this, or you shouldn't do this.' It has been so great to have someone to process things with."

The coach has helped Amanda and Dan navigate their roles as a couple, especially when it comes to working together, as well as develop two multiethnic congregations and deal with situations that arise in church life. "Anything you can think of!" Amanda says.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through SSC*

In addition to launching the coaching program, Start and Strengthen Churches also implemented a new process for assessing potential church planters. We used to invite people to assessment centers and then determine whether they have the needed gifts. Much of that work is now done at the conference level, and that strategy has helped us reduce our costs.

Reflecting our commitment to grow the Covenant mosaic and increase the number of women church planters, 60 percent of assessment center participants were people of color and 27 percent were women this past year.

We also signed a historic memorandum of understanding with the International Federation of Free Evangelical Churches (IFFEC) to translate and edit the Evangelical Covenant Church's congregational vitality materials so they can be used more freely in European countries and contexts.



We partnered with Covenant Offices colleagues in our new coaches training program.

IFFEC is composed of church federations from the Free Church heritage in 33 countries. They meet for mutual support, cooperation in mission, and to help member federations develop healthy churches.

It is a new season for vitality in Europe, where only a tiny minority of the population identify as evangelical Christians. It was energizing to see the hope leaders had for their churches and neighbors. The vitality pathway has instilled an expectation that churches can find new health and missional focus.

**SSC VISION STATEMENT:** We believe the local church is God's foundational strategy to carry out mission in the world. Through planting new churches and providing resources to strengthen existing congregations, these ministries can reach more people, in more places, among more populations, with the hope of Christ.

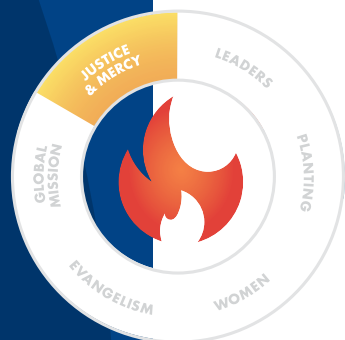
**PLEASE PRAY FOR** the Holy Spirit to continue to bring health and renewal to ECC churches in the midst of Covid-19 stresses. Also, pray for the Vitality team as we seek to be responsive to the needs of the church at this time.

**59 ACTIVE CHURCH PLANTS**  
**60% BEING PLANTED BY PEOPLE OF COLOR**  
**AND 27% HAVE A WOMAN AS LEAD OR CO-LEAD**



LOVE MERCY DO JUSTICE

PAUL ROBINSON | Executive Minister



OUR VISION IS ANCHORED  
IN CREATING INTERACTIVE,  
CROSS-CULTURAL,  
AND JUSTICE-CENTRIC  
EXPERIENCES FOR THE  
COVENANT COMMUNITY



Sankofa participants visit the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, the first national memorial dedicated to acknowledging the victims of racial terror and the legacy of lynching in America.

**C**ity Covenant Church is located in Detroit's Brightmoor neighborhood, the city's most economically challenged community. This joy-filled congregation is inspired to bring renewal to where they live. They do this in part through the Bezalel project, which provides funds from the denomination to help the church purchase distressed properties, rehab them, and then rent them to residents at affordable rates.

This past year funds from the Bezalel project helped City Covenant Church overhaul a house where a five-year-old girl lost her life in a tragic shooting. This house was transformed into a resource center for single mothers in the Brightmoor community.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through LMDJ*

For the first time ever, we had 40 Covenant pastors and credentialed leaders participate in Sankofa, one of our



Justice Journey for Kids

immersive discipleship experiences. The group included two superintendents and one associate superintendent.

In collaboration with Make and Deepen Disciples, we created Justice Journey for Kids, a 12-week curriculum for churches.

During the 2019 Midwinter Conference in Denver, we held our first Midwest Conference Journey to Mosaic (J2M) event. This was a pilot partnership among the Midwest Conference, LMDJ, and North Park Theological Seminary. J2M seeks to create a greater awareness of racial injustice. Participants learned about aspects of the region's history that most had never heard of, such as the Sand Creek Massacre, Doctrine of Discovery, and the extent to which Japanese were interned in the U.S. during WWII.

This year we provided disaster relief funds to local churches to benefit survivors of flooding in the Midwest, and fires in California. In the first part of 2020, we issued \$53,000 in grants to relief efforts in Puerto Rico, which was damaged by earthquakes, and to Nashville, where tornadoes cut a wide swath of damage.

**LMDJ VISION STATEMENT:** Our mission is to join God in making things right in our broken world. We do this through resourcing and equipping the local church in its call to love, serve, and work together with people at the margins toward holistic individual, family, and community transformation.

**PLEASE PRAY THAT** our churches would gain an even deeper understanding of mercy and justice as being central to the gospel. In our nation's fractured condition, join us as we pray for peace and the pursuit of racial righteousness.





One of the guiding values of the Evangelical Covenant Church is maintaining a “conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit.” From our humble beginnings, we’ve trusted the Holy Spirit to form us as a body of believers who truly care for our neighbors, especially those in need. The sacrificial and amazing donors of the ECC have made it possible for us to continue this legacy of help. Recently, Covenant pastor Robert Rife received much needed assistance from the Ministers’ Care and Crisis Fund. He states, “I’ve worked in many denominational settings, and nowhere have we received more on-the-ground support than in the Covenant.” From Covenant Ministries of Benevolence to the Ministers’ Care and Crisis Fund, we have been that on-the-ground support for our neighbors and Mission Friends.

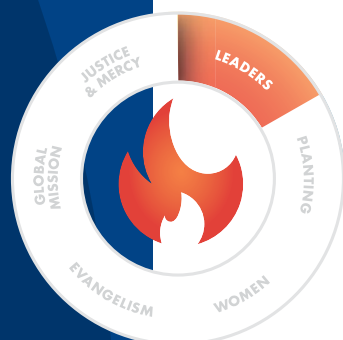
### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through DL*

The Develop Leaders team has intentionally relied upon the Holy Spirit to see us through perhaps the most difficult days the Covenant has ever seen. By faith and dependence upon the Holy Spirit, we’ve seen Covenanters generously contribute to the Ministers’ Care and Crisis Fund and other Covenant-led appeals for financial support. Some of our clergy are food-challenged while others are healthcare challenged; others need counseling services, and some are simply having difficulty socially distancing themselves from the people they love and are called to serve. The Holy Spirit has blessed us to walk alongside our sisters and brothers in ministry and to assist them in substantive and meaningful ways.

Currently, we are working to providing our clergy with the resources and information that will help them lead well amid a pandemic, populational unrest, and an unparalleled financial crisis.

We have also seen the Holy Spirit work as the Develop Leaders team has moved beyond being just colleagues; we truly see each other as friends on mission together. I have the great privilege of working with highly skilled and gifted people who love the Lord and truly love God’s people.

**DL VISION STATEMENT:** We serve the mission of the Covenant Church by advocating, endorsing, caring for, and enriching the



*The cancellation of Gather 2020 meant the cancellation of the ordination service. We envision an ordination service in 2021 with nearly 100 ordinands as we combine the ordination classes of 2020 and 2021.*

lives of ECC clergy. Our vision is to be present with our pastors to the best extent possible and be prepared to resource them with opportunities for personal leadership and spiritual growth.

In DL, we believe it is our duty and obligation to pray for others, which means we sometimes fail to consider our own need for prayer! Therefore, we are truly honored and blessed that our Covenant family would intentionally lift us in prayer.

### PLEASE PRAY THAT

- The Lord will grant us with the wisdom and insight necessary to resource and assist pastors in this climate of violence, hatred, and indifference. Pray that we will be the listening ear and helping hand our ministers need in order to carry out their call.
- As a team we will grow in knowledge of how to undergird and support pastors whose families have been devastated by dwindling church budgets, sickness, and even death. Pray that we can meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of our clergy as they press on in ministry.
- Our pastors and chaplains will stay mentally healthy and grow stronger in faith as we navigate these days.
- The candidates whose ordinations were cancelled in June 2020 will not become discouraged during this time of waiting and that they will know their value and importance in ministry isn’t diminished because of this delay.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT  
HAS BLESSED  
US TO WALK  
ALONGSIDE  
OUR SISTERS  
AND BROTHERS  
IN MINISTRY**



SERVE GLOBALLY

AL TIZON | Executive Minister

**T**wo civil wars devastated the Congo between 1996 and the 2000s. Terrorized families like Kpoda Ngandali's were forced to flee their homes to live in the bush. Soldiers looted homes, schools, and clinics, including the Covenant hospital at Karawa. They wiped out livestock and crops like the coffee plants Ngandali's father grew.

Now Paul Carlson Partnership's Karawa Coffee Project is helping the 54-year-old widow and mother earn a living from growing the same crops she knew as a child. The project offered her new saplings, and she learned how to rejuvenate older, fallow plants. Now she stands before her 1,050 coffee plants, knowing they could bring her financial freedom. Like other coffee producers, she intercroops with peanuts that she harvests every year as she waits for the coffee cherries to mature.

Today she looks forward to sending her children and grandchildren to school, being able to cover her medical expenses, and even setting aside some money for emergencies.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through SG*

In Latin America, we partnered with Confraternidad de Iglesias del Pacto Evangélico to establish a missionary-sending system that could be a model for other national partners. As a result, four missionaries from Latin America have been sent to different countries in Latin America.

In Africa, Covenant Kids Congo powered by World Vision in partnership with the Congo Covenant Church has launched Chosen: Flip the Script initiative. The program allows children in Gemena and Karawa to "choose" the family or individual that will sponsor them, which empowers the children of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In Europe, we work with partners in Sweden, France, and Germany to minister to refugees who suffer war-related emotional trauma, struggle to meet physical needs amid lengthy asylum procedures, and work to develop language and job skills.

In Asia, the Hindustani Covenant Church partnered with Covenant World Relief to drill a dozen wells and construct check dams and roof-top rainwater harvesting structures. They also taught water



Kpoda Ngandali is a coffee producer with Karawa Coffee Project (above). Global personnel are partnering with LMDJ to address Islamophobia (below).



**WE SEEK TO PRACTICE THE WHOLE MISSION ACROSS CULTURES AND AROUND THE WORLD WITH AND THROUGH OUR PARTNER CHURCHES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

conservation and organic farming techniques. As a result, people's health improved and agricultural production increased.

In partnership with Love Mercy Do Justice (LMDJ), we launched the FREE initiative to address local and global sex trafficking. Our Middle East North Africa (MENA) personnel are collaborating with LMDJ to address islamophobia in the United States.

**SG VISION STATEMENT:** We seek to practice the whole mission across cultures and around the world with and through our partner churches and organizations serving in 59 countries.

**PLEASE PRAY THAT** we share the whole gospel. We seek to advocate alongside poor and marginalized people in places like India, Philippines, Palestine, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Mexico. Pray for reconciliation and peacemaking work in Colombia and South Sudan. Pray for revival in places like Germany and Romania. Pray for the FREE initiative to engage in anti-sex trafficking efforts, domestically and internationally. Pray for international students and churches to connect, grow, and serve together. Pray for more personnel to be sent around the world and greater diversity in the people sent.







MISSION ADVANCEMENT

GAYLE GILREATH | Executive Director

**M**ission Advancement serves to bountifully resource the expansive mission and ministry of the Covenant and to inspire transformational generosity as we join God in God's mission to see more disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world.

Generous support by individuals, churches, and affiliates is invested in efforts that encourage, equip, and resource the local church and unite local churches together in mission and ministry to extend the whole gospel to the whole world.

We are blessed to work together as a Mission Advancement team to provide our local churches and individual donors with transparency about their donations and generosity opportunities each year to join together in expanding the mission and ministry of the Covenant. With the recent retirement of Curt Peterson, we will be seeking to fill his position with a director of church engagement who will walk alongside churches and be a resource for church stewardship and partnership. Our team is also seeking a director of global advancement to help enhance our support of Serve Globally ministries. Please join us in prayer as we expand our team with individuals who deeply care for Covenant mission and ministry.

Mission Advancement ministry is deeply rooted in three principles: gratitude, invitation, and stewardship.

**GRATITUDE** Advancement as gratitude means we first and foremost trust in a generous and creative God who has provided an abundance of resources to share in supporting God's work through the ECC. We aspire to develop and encourage a culture of generosity in the ECC as we give thanks to God for what we have received and use our resources to bless others. We continuously thank God for all Covenant churches and individuals who help support continued kingdom ministry.

## 3STRAND STRONG WOVEN TOGETHER TO PROVIDE STRENGTH FOR ALL TO BE FAITHFUL AND FRUITFUL LIVING WITH GOD

	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>TOTAL GIVING</b>	<b>\$20,309,790</b>	<b>\$19,823,578</b>	<b>\$20,788,629</b>	<b>\$22,528,168*</b>
INDIVIDUAL GIVING	\$6,479,693	\$6,582,975	\$7,624,578	\$10,244,344*
CHURCH GIVING	\$10,772,431	\$10,762,446	\$10,647,115	\$10,081,453
BEQUEST GIVING	\$3,057,665	\$2,478,158	\$2,516,936	\$2,202,371

\*Includes one-time NCP gift of \$2,500,000 for SSC

Giving Income represents all philanthropic gifts to both the base mission budget and designated project ministries in 2019.

**INVITATION** When most people think of Advancement, they think of asking for money. But asking others to participate financially in the work of the Covenant is an invitation to participate in something larger than ourselves. Along with supporting our annual fund, which we call the Covenant Mission and Ministry Fund, we invite donors to join us in several ways to support our five mission priorities as they give back to local churches through engagement opportunities, curriculum, and support services. We also extend opportunities for legacy giving through bequests or other planned giving vehicles.

Churches are invited to participate financially in the work of the Covenant through 3StrandStrong—Congregation. Conference. Covenant. In Ecclesiastes 4:12 we read that a cord of three strands is not easily broken. That is what 3StrandStrong is all about. We are a cord of three strands: more than 850 local congregations, 11 regional conferences, and the Covenant woven together provide strength for all to be faithful and fruitful living with God.

We invite each congregation to devote a combined tithe of general fund income to partner with the Covenant and their regional conference. Suggested giving levels are: 6.5% to the Covenant and 3.5% to the conference.

From this generous partnership, services and resources are made available to the local church through the ministry of our five mission priorities (see icons below).

**STEWARDSHIP** We believe stewardship means transparent and thoughtful use of financial resources, and also caring for each other as the body of Christ. Author and pastor Henri Nouwen wrote on the spirituality of fundraising, "Fundraising is always a call to conversion." We are all constantly being called into a new, more spiritual relationship with our needs and resources. We are truly in it together.

Thank you for the ways you are investing in the Covenant through your generosity and faithfulness.

YOUR INVESTMENT  
IN COVENANT  
MISSION & MINISTRY  
SUPPORTS...



DISCIPLESHIP AND  
EVANGELISM  
MATERIALS AND TRAINING



PLANTING CHURCHES,  
CHURCH LOAN PROGRAMS FOR  
LAND AND FACILITY PROJECTS



INTERNATIONAL  
MINISTRY PARTNERSHIPS  
IN 59 COUNTRIES



RESOURCING LOCAL CHURCHES WITH  
DEVELOPMENT GRANTS TO MINISTER TO PEOPLE  
AND NEIGHBORS WHERE RESOURCES ARE LIMITED  
BUT COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION IS FLOURISHING



EQUIPPING AND  
SUPPORTING PASTORS,  
MINISTERS' CARE AND CRISIS  
FUND AND BENEFIT PROGRAMS



## FINANCE

STEVE KLIMKOWSKI | Chief Financial Officer

**T**he ECC Finance team is charged with ensuring that the resources of the ECC are stewarded in a manner that sustains and advances the ECC mission, glorifies God, and honors the intent of the ECC's donors.

We are a mission support area that continually seeks better accountability, prudent financial and risk management, and faithful allocation of God's provision across the entire sphere of ECC ministries and people.

**WE SEEK TO SERVE** the local church, God's basic instrument for mission. Our desire is to provide financial leadership and resources that nourish the local church community.

**WE SEEK TO PROPERLY CARE FOR** our Ministerium through an increasing array of tools and programs that furthers wellness among pastors and missionaries.

**WE AIM TO PROMPTLY ADMINISTER AND HONOR** the faithful generosity of our many wonderful donors.

**WE SEEK TO BE A GOOD PARTNER** to our conferences and affiliates in our shared work.

**WE ENDEAVOR TO PROVIDE** the ECC with strategic leadership and best practices around employee benefits, including retirement, health, and insurance offerings.

### Key Accomplishments

Fiscal year 2019 (ended January 31, 2020) was an exciting year of discovery, progress, and challenge as I experienced my first year as the ECC's chief financial officer. I am grateful to God for providing the ECC with the resources and people needed need to sustain and advance its mission to see more disciples, among more populations, in a more caring and just world.

We welcomed two new team members: Melissa Liew, director of accounting, and Stephanie Adams, director of finance. We were also blessed by the leadership of Merideth Randles, the new chair of the Finance Committee of the Executive Board.

Paul Hawkinson, former director of pensions, did a wonderful job of reformulating the Covenant Pension Plan in a manner that will help ensure that the ECC will meet every dollar of its pension obligation to its pastors.

## OUR FOCUS IS ALWAYS ON THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE WHOLE

The Finance team worked hard to provide greater transparency in its reporting of the ECC budget and its funding. We also focused on enhanced stewardship and greater enterprise-wide collaboration in its mission to serve the ECC and its ministry ambitions.

We are pleased to report that fiscal year 2019 budget came within 0.3% of our targets. Total expenses increased 5.7% and total undesignated giving was up nearly 1% over fiscal year 2018. Total church giving was down 5% and total individual giving was up 1.5% over fiscal year 2018. There were \$1.9 million in extrabudgetary expenses during the year—the largest portion being a \$1.6 million contribution to the ECC's lay pension plan. The extrabudgetary expenses, in tandem with a budgeted \$.7 million ministry investment (reserve draw), resulted in a total annual reserve draw of approximately \$2.6 million.

The Covenant Pension Plan and Bethany Benefits insurance programs remained sound. The pension plan enjoyed fully funded status as of January 31, 2020; Bethany Benefits was well-reserved in excess of expected claims.

In the coming year, we are excited about the opportunities to build on our solid financial foundation. We are focused on creating better financial reporting across the ECC ecosystem, enhancing transparency around our annual budget and its funding, tightening our expense management, expanding programs around pastor economic wellness (particularly in under-resourced churches), growing our financial reserves, continuing to build our Advancement efforts and our 3StrandStrong bonds, and creating greater efficiencies through automation and software enhancements.

Ultimately, our focus is always on the stewardship of the whole. If we do not steward well, we will not mission well.

### Fiscal Year 2019

#### BASE MISSION EXPENSES

	TOTAL
Start & Strengthen Churches	\$ 3,928,160
Make & Deepen Disciples	1,122,817
Develop Leaders	1,803,030
Love Mercy Do Justice	615,179
Serve Globally	5,537,153
Support: Communications	1,221,604
Support: Shared Services	3,975,241
<b>Mission Investment Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,203,082</b>

#### BASE MISSION INCOME

	TOTAL	% OF INCOME
ECC Church Support	\$ 8,231,996	45%
Donor Support	2,418,400	13%
Fees & Ministry Investment	4,584,305	25%
Transfers—Bequests & Living Legacy	2,310,886	13%
Communication Sales	344,118	2%
Rental Income	313,433	2%
<b>Mission Income Total</b>	<b>\$ 18,203,137</b>	<b>100%</b>

Base Mission Income Total represents income (both philanthropic gifts and earnings) directed to the 2019 Base Mission Budget





## OPERATIONS

REBECCA GONZALEZ | Chief Operating Officer

**T**ogether with our mission colleagues, we witnessed the work of the Holy Spirit in us, through our efforts, and throughout the Covenant Church. In 2019, we resourced the most attended Covenant Annual Meeting in our history. In response to Covid-19 this year, we adjusted our infrastructure to sustain our denominational engagements in a virtual environment.

Our mission area experienced opportunities and challenges that first seemed like interruptions to our ebb and flow, but with time resulted in God's call to greater growth, responsiveness, and fruitfulness. Covenant Events transitioned to the President's Office, and we welcomed the Communications team to our area. Four new director-level positions were developed to elevate stewardship in human resource, design, digital, and operations.

We desire for individuals, churches, and conferences to fulfill their call to join God in God's mission. Communications, Facilities, Governance, Human Resources, and Information Technology teams experienced God's grace and faithfulness anew through:

- **THE NEW ECC DATABASE HUB**, a centralized data repository that allows for the sharing, consolidation, and reporting of denominational information.
- **THE COVENANT COMPANION** recognized as best denominational magazine by both the Associated Church Press and the Evangelical Press Association.
- **MANAGING PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES** led to staff's growth in cultural awareness and competency.
- **OUR EMERGENCY READINESS AND RESPONSE TEAM** and processes—an equipping process that began in 2017 and prepared us for an effective response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **COVENANT EVENTS** were attended by more than 6,000 Covenanters including Gather 2019, Triennial, Midwinter 2020, and Unite for Hope, an online youth ministry experience.

As members of the body of Christ, we seek to collaborate with the whole church to create an environment conducive for the development of kingdom efforts and impact.



In July 2019, the I Am Conference—a gathering for women by women—took place in Minneapolis.



## COVENANT AFFILIATES

*Covenant Ministries  
of Benevolence*

*North Park University*

*North Park  
Theological Seminary*

*Centro Hispano  
de Estudios Teológicos*

*National Covenant  
Properties*

*Covenant Trust  
Company*

OUR AFFILIATED  
MINISTRIES GIVE  
LEADERSHIP TO  
SPECIALIZED  
MINISTRIES IN  
COMPLEX SETTINGS.

## COVENANT MINISTRIES OF BENEVOLENCE

Jessica's House, in Turlock, California, is named after a young girl whose untimely death from leukemia brought her parents together with another family grieving an untimely loss. Through a partnership between these friends and the Emanuel Medical Center (EMC), Jessica's House was born in 2012. The ministry provides grief support for children, teens, young adults, and families who have lost a loved one.

After the 2014 sale of EMC, Jessica's House needed a new home. In 2019, they launched the "For Healing Hearts" capital campaign, aiming to raise \$6 million (half of which was a challenge match from EMC Health, Inc.) by 2021. Through God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, in the midst of an economic downturn and global pandemic, they reached their goal in June 2020! Jessica's House is on track to celebrate the opening of a new permanent home in the spring of 2021. Their fundraising success means they will immediately be able to support the first 400 children who come for services. They anticipate supporting more than 600 children, teens, and young adults (and their families) annually.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through CMB*

During the Covid-19 global pandemic, we have marveled at ways the Holy Spirit has guided, protected, and provided discernment to our leaders. It was especially evident in the quick yet difficult decisions Covenant Living Communities and Covenant Ability Networks leaders had to address.

ROGER OXENDALE | *President and Chief Executive Officer*



On March 4, Covenant Living mobilized 30 staff who gathered almost daily to address the logistics necessary to serve all of the residents and families of the 16 Covenant Living Communities. The leadership team, under President Terri Cunliffe, was guided by two key principles: protect the residents and provide for the staff. Throughout the Covid-19 challenge, 400 temporary and permanent employees have been recruited to provide additional necessary services and to step in for existing employees who were necessarily quarantined. Through the work of the team and guidance of the Holy Spirit the communities have begun to reopen.

Another beautiful example of the Spirit's work was at Ädelbrook in Cromwell, Connecticut. Ädelbrook is a school for 150 children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disabilities. Despite innumerable challenges from disruptions caused by Covid-19, all five students who were on track for graduation successfully completed their studies and are going on to community college, trade school, etc. Pouring rain at the graduation ceremony did not dampen anyone's spirit. In fact, the graduates danced in the rain to celebrate their great accomplishment, along

with President Alyssa Goduti after she delivered her congratulatory remarks.

CMB ministries include: Covenant Living Communities and Services, EMC Health, Inc. (includes Jessica's House), and Covenant Initiatives for Care (which includes the Covenant Ability Networks, Ädelbrook, and Covenant Children's Home).

**CMB VISION STATEMENT:** Covenant Ministries of Benevolence provides support, guidance, and assistance to ministries serving the underserved. We provide services through a large family of ministries, including centers for youth and adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities, and we extend the reach of other ECC ministries by contributing financial and intellectual capital.

**PLEASE PRAY THAT** through Covenant Initiatives for Care, CMB will continue to grow and expand services for populations that are on the margins. Please pray for these efforts as well as for more churches to come alongside to support CMB affiliate ministries in their communities. Please also pray for CMB leadership as we re-envision our identity and path forward without connection to the large hospital ministries that are no longer a part of CMB.







MARY SURRIDGE  
President |

## NORTH PARK UNIVERSITY

The unexpected accomplishment of the past year has been North Park University's institutional response to the Covid-19 pandemic and our determination to keep our students' academic progress successfully on track. This spring we had to send our students home and close the campus to daily activities, but our dedicated faculty and staff made the difficult pivot to online education and service for our students so their education could continue on schedule. The pandemic stopped international travel and commerce, it stopped weddings and funerals, it stopped the wide world of sports. Millions of Americans lost their jobs, and many thousands lost their lives. But the pandemic did not stop North Park University—and, as we congratulated our class of 2020, it did not stop our students from completing their studies online and earning their degrees.

This summer our Emergency Management Team has transitioned into our Campus Reopening Task Force, meeting online daily to plan and implement logistical changes and safety protocols required to bring our students, faculty, and staff back to campus safely. We know that the on-campus, in-person experience is best if we can make it happen wisely under the circumstances we face. So we have developed a detailed operational plan for the fall semester and a budget for the financial challenges of the new fiscal year, both supported by the North Park Board of Trustees. We are ready for the fall, and we are



ready to respond rapidly and well to changing circumstances.

This was our ministry highlight—keeping our students' academic progress on track despite the incredible challenges of the pandemic and associated financial impact—but we have not remained exclusively in crisis mode.

We have also focused on our long-range future. We took a big first step in North Park Next, an exciting, three-phase collaborative enterprise that will help us create an inspiring future for the university we love—a future that will see us position ourselves as the model for Christian higher education in 21st century America. We seek a strategic and thriving future highlighted by programs that are mission central, market sensitive, and create the financial margin we need to succeed in the highly competitive environment of higher education.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through NPU*

None of this could have happened without the Holy Spirit's presence in our work every day. We begin each day by committing our work to God's glory and seek the Holy Spirit

as our guide in our energy and efforts. We trust God to move through the Spirit in our work, on our campus, and through our faculty and staff every day to provide the education, preparation, and spiritual growth of our students.

**NPU VISION STATEMENT:** Building on our core institutional identity—Christian, city-centered, intercultural—our vision is to create a university of uncommon character and enduring excellence, where faith, learning, and service meet.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff, and for successful progress for our students as we work to support their progress academically, spiritually, and with the professional training they will need, all for lives of significance and service for God's glory and neighbor's good.

And please pray that through our strategic planning process, the university will elevate its three distinctives—Christian, city-centered, and intercultural—and that in the sum of these distinctives we will increasingly find our unique value and competitive advantage, as well as a financially sustainable and thriving future.



DAVID KERSTEN  
| Vice President of  
Church Relations and  
Dean of the Seminary

## NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

In 2020, Covenanters had two opportunities to experience God through reflections from students in our School of Restorative Arts (SRA). Currently 77 of these students reside at Stateville Correctional Center, a maximum-security prison about 35 miles southwest of Chicago. Seven of those students wrote reflections for the 2020 Week of Prayer guide, "Reconciling Grace."

And on Good Friday, many throughout the ECC participated in a virtual Stations of the Cross by watching the video "The Cross and the Prison Cell," which featured faculty and friends of the SRA who read reflections written by SRA students, many of whom are incarcerated at Stateville. This video collaboration featured work of the SRA's redemptive storytelling cohort and reminds us of the power of narrative to humanize people who have been dehumanized.

We are excited to be able to expand the SRA this fall with the addition of a 20-person cohort at Logan Correctional Center, a women's prison located about 200 miles southwest of Chicago. Thanks to the generosity of a major donor, the women at Logan will be able to utilize technology for distance learning.

During this past year, we expanded our Master of Arts cohort program. The Pacific Southwest Conference's Ignite program currently has three cohorts of 87 students.

This fall, we're launching the Midwest Conference's Equip program with a cohort of 32 students.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through NPTS*

God has truly been an ever-present help for our SRA students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to incarceration, these students experience isolation as a part of their everyday life. However, being on lockdown since March has been an especially difficult experience. They have endured the Covid-19 related deaths of two of their Stateville classmates and seen countless others around them become ill. Despite all the despair surrounding them, our inside students continued with their coursework and submitted assignments via correspondence. Inside students who serve as writing advisers have stepped up to ensure that classes continue moving forward. Only the Holy Spirit can stir up this kind of endurance and perseverance.

**NPTS VISION STATEMENT:** North Park Theological Seminary embraces the university's core values of Christian, city-centered, and intercultural as we seek to form ministers and leaders who impact the world for God's glory and neighbor's good. As faculty and staff, we are a team of educators and innovators working together to respond to the changing needs of our cities and world. NPTS's teaching and learning are supported by seasoned pastors, cutting-edge scholars, and experienced pedagogues. We believe that theological education is a vehicle for anyone in

the ECC and other Christian bodies who strive to embody justice, diversity, and charity in their vocation.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** our SRA inside students at Stateville who have been on lockdown since March and have watched others around them become infected with and/or die from Covid-19. Please also pray for their families. And pray that NPTS can continue to grow and expand in this time of fiscal restraint while also managing our resources well. Finally, please pray for the safety of our students, faculty, and staff as we begin a new year of onsite learning at the main campus in Chicago as well as satellite sites for intensives.

*Ed and Lynda Delgado received separate Irving C. Lambert awards in honor of their commitment to urban and ethnic ministry. Ed retired as president of CHET in December 2019*



NICHOLAS BLOCK | *Transitional Leader of Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos (CHET)*



### **CENTRO HISPANO DE ESTUDIOS TEOLÓGICOS**

One highlight from this past year is witnessing the resilience our students have demonstrated. Many of them are first generation Latinos who are not tech savvy. Transitioning to an all-virtual platform set a very high learning curve for them. Yet they thrived. Life skills, such as overcoming technology obstacles, are also part of the CHET learning experience. Instead of shrinking, our students have shown an even greater thirst for preparing for ministry.

This resilience was evident even before the global pandemic. Many of our students do not have a dedicated space in their homes to complete their coursework, so they do what they can. One student, a woman in her 50s, sometimes used her car as a quiet place to study. She has been in and out of the hospital in the past few months, but she continued her studies, sometimes from her hospital bed!

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through CHET*

The stories of our students' resilience are certainly evidence of the Spirit at work in our ministry. In addition, our staff absolutely could not do what we do without the help of the Holy Spirit. We have been without a president since the end of 2019. In addition to filling in that gap, our small staff (all of whom are credentialed in the ECC) have been providing pastoral care for our students as well as academic support.

During this chaotic season, the Spirit has brought to fruition some of our dreams about virtual education. While CHET has had a virtual platform for about four years, we had not utilized it fully because of the technological limitations our students faced. Half of our bachelor in Christian ministry students are in Ecuador and knew nothing about Zoom before studying with CHET. We are encouraged by the progress students have made and are dreaming even more, now that we know we can teach any class at any time.

**CHET VISION STATEMENT:** Centro Hispano de Estudios Teológicos (CHET) aims to be the leading Hispanic center for Christian theological formation.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** the overall health of CHET's staff and for opportunities and resources to engage in self-care. We are excited that in August the highly gifted scholar Dr. Juan F. Martinez joined us as CHET's new president. Please pray for his adjustment to the position and for his future leadership. We also ask for prayer for our students as they continue to develop the skills to thrive in online classes, which will be our only format this fall.





PETER HEDSTROM | *President of National Covenant Properties*

## NATIONAL COVENANT PROPERTIES

NCP has been serving member churches and affiliated organizations of the Evangelical Covenant Church since our founding in 1970. It has been a blessing for NCP to be part of the bigger story for the last 50 years. Our goal is to continue to connect mission-minded Covenanters with kingdom projects. Together we can move the ministry forward and reach more people for God. The NCP team is honored to serve, and with assets reaching \$420 million and revenues continuing to grow, NCP is well-positioned to facilitate and meet more ministry opportunities.

### *Five Decades of Ministry Stories and Growth* 1970 — 2020



The offer and sale of the Certificates is limited to persons who, prior to receipt of our Offering Circular, were members of, contributors to, participants in, or affiliates of The Evangelical Covenant Church, including any program, activity, or organization that constitutes a part of The Evangelical Covenant Church, or any of its conferences, or any congregation of The Evangelical Covenant Church, or other persons who are ancestors, descendants, or successors in interest to such persons (Investors). The offer and sale of certificate to investors residing in the state of Washington is limited to persons or entities who are, prior to the solicitation for the purchase of said Certificates, members of, contributors to, or listed as participants in, National Covenant Properties, or their relatives (as defined in RCW 21.20.005(13)). This does not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy the Certificates. There shall not be any sale of the Certificates in any state in which such offer, solicitation, or sale is not authorized. The offering is made solely by the Offering Circular. The offering of Certificates involves certain risks, which are more fully disclosed in the Offering Circular under the heading "Risk Factors." In the event NCP exercises its right to redeem a Certificate prior to maturity and upon sixty (60) days notice to the holder thereof, payment of the outstanding principal and interest will be paid to the holder to the date of redemption. The Variable Rate Certificates, Demand Investment Accounts, Individual Retirement Account (IRA) Certificates, and Health Savings Account (HSA) Certificates are not available for sale to investors residing in South Carolina. The Variable Rate Certificates and Demand Investment Accounts are not available for sale to investors residing in Louisiana. NCP's Certificates are not insured by any governmental agency or private insurance company, including the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or any state bank, insurance fund, or any other governmental agency.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through NCP*

#### YOU INVEST

- 4,500 mission-minded investors participate in the bigger story by investing in NCP.
- Investment participation is growing to more than \$342 million in fixed-income investments, including short-term certificates, Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), and Health Savings Accounts (HSAs).

#### WE LEND

- Loans are part of the bigger story, and together with our investors NCP has been able to fund 290 loans to Covenant churches, camps, retirement facilities, and affiliated organizations totaling \$300 million in commitments.
- Real Estate Services have also been part of the bigger story resulting in 43 Covenant projects totaling \$34 million in loans in 2019.

The NCP staff helps churches and project leaders identify land and facility options, negotiate leases and real estate purchases, construct and expand current facilities, as well as sell and lease out current church properties.



In January, NCP donated \$2.5 million to Covenant church planting and vitality ministries.

#### MINISTRY GROWS

- Financial and Real Estate Training is part of the bigger story. In partnership with Start and Strengthen Churches and regional conferences, NCP offers financial leadership seminars for pastors, staff, and church leaders to encourage best practices for healthy and missional churches. Through this 3StrandStrong initiative, NCP has educated:
  - 500 Covenanters
  - 104 Pastors
  - 244 Covenant Churches
  - At 20 Seminars in 8 Conferences



NCP provides construction financing and lease assistance to Covenant churches and ministries, such as this project in California.

- Through our "undercover visitor" program, NCP evaluates church facilities and worship experiences to assist churches to better use their buildings as a tool for ministry.

**NCP VISION STATEMENT:** As the Evangelical Covenant Church's loan source and short-term investment arm, National Covenant Properties equips Covenant churches and individuals to help grow the kingdom of God through investments and loans that drive ministry like no other resource. NCP supports growth of local and regional ministries by connecting mission-minded investments to kingdom-expanding projects.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** strong leadership of our churches going forward, health and safety of our ministry partners and staff, and wisdom and discernment for the growth of NCP as we look to the future.

**NATIONALCOVENANTPROPERTIES.ORG**  
Watch our 50th anniversary video and interview with the four presidents of NCP and to learn more about our ministry.



ANN WIESBROCK | *President of Covenant Trust Company*

## COVENANT TRUST COMPANY

**G**ood money management opens the door to generosity, both in current giving and future gifts. Covenant Trust is all about good money management providing investment accounts, trustee services, and estate and gift planning to individuals, families, and institutions throughout the United States. For the past 30 years we have been serving our clients with excellence and care, providing them with peace of mind in helping them prepare for their future and empowering them to be as generous as possible toward family, community, and ministry.



### *Our Guiding Values*

**Our guiding values, identified from our beginning in 1978 as a team within the Evangelical Covenant Church and through our transition in 1988 to a chartered trust company, continue to drive our culture, our actions, and the work we do.**

**PURPOSE** Your purpose is the starting point. We encourage you and your family or organization to dream big, and we work together to live out your purpose.

**EXCELLENCE** We strive to provide the best possible financial expertise shaped by data-driven analysis and ongoing education.

**INTEGRITY** We aim to earn trust by demonstrating the highest loyalty to clients and beneficiaries.

**SERVICE** People are more important than profits. We serve people of all resource levels in every stage of life.

**COMMUNITY** We're better together. We foster the bond between our team and our clients, sharing life's joys and strengthening each other through difficult times.

### *The Movement of the Holy Spirit through Covenant Trust*

- Covenant Trust cares for \$2 billion in assets, serving more than 4,000 clients with over 3,500 accounts.
- Rock solid investment results: At 2019 year end, all investment model portfolios met or beat their appropriate five-year blended benchmark, gross of fees.
- We encourage and support clients in living out their purpose, including creating their own generosity plans.
- In 2019, our IRA clients collectively made almost 1,300 Qualified Charitable Distributions from their IRAs, totaling \$2.4 million in current giving.
- Our Donor-Advised Fund clients sent 274 grants to their favorite charities totaling \$882,000 in giving.

- Our Covenant friends used Covenant Trust services to make 113 gifts of appreciated stock to ECC ministries, totaling \$1.3 million in charitable contributions.
- Through the estate plans of our generous clients who have passed away, ECC ministries received \$5.1 million this year.

As the workplace shifted due to the global pandemic, the Covenant Trust team didn't miss a beat and continued to work at full capacity. We continue to communicate with clients; manage trusts, IRAs, and investment portfolios; and assist clients in creating their generosity plans.

We are blessed and thankful for the continued support of the Evangelical Covenant Church and its members and friends across the globe. It is our privilege to serve you with excellent money management services.

### **COVENANT TRUST VISION STATEMENT:**

By taking care of the financial side of things, we free our clients to do what they are called to do and be as generous as they want to be with family, community, and ministry. We faithfully empower generosity. We are committed to being a part of the solution to issues of institutional racial discrimination and other matters of social justice and have begun a new initiative to put our values into action.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR** the health of our clients and staff, our growth in serving more people and empowering them to express generosity, and progress in our work for social justice.





AS THE WORLD FACES  
THE THREAT OF COVID-19,  
WE REMAIN THE BODY  
OF CHRIST, DEPENDENT  
ON GOD'S GRACE AND  
DEPENDENT ON  
EACH OTHER

As the coronavirus pandemic spread throughout the world this spring, the ECC announced its Covid-19 Financial Relief Initiative. This initiative provides care and support in four areas of Covenant life and ministry:

**SHORT-TERM LOANS** (interest-free) to local churches, conferences, and camps

**GLOBAL RELIEF GRANTS** to the global church as we walk alongside partners serving marginalized people around the world

**MISSIONAL RELIEF GRANTS** to local churches so they can help care for their communities in response to this pandemic

**MINISTERS' CARE AND CRISIS FUND** for Covenant clergy, which helps us care for our pastors' personal needs, such as counseling and health care, or emergency home repairs beyond their local church's ability to provide

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our ministry partners, staff, and donors who make this relief initiative possible. For more information on grants, or to give to the initiative, go to [covchurch.org/covid-19](https://covchurch.org/covid-19).



## Superintendents

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## Executive Board

CHAIR: **Jenell Pluim**

VICE-CHAIR: **David Holder**

SECRETARY: **Julie Persson**

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:

**John Wenrich**  
president

**Tammy K. Swanson-Draheim**  
liaison from Council of Superintendents

**Arthur DeRooy**  
liaison from Board of Directors of  
Covenant Ministries of Benevolence

**Erin Oleniczak**  
liaison from Board of Trustees  
of North Park University

**Byron Kaopuiki (2025)**  
Vancouver, Washington

**Lisa Olson (2025)**  
Shoreview, Minnesota

**Karen Almquist Stein (2025)**  
Greeley, Colorado

**Valerie Weyand (2025)**  
Littleton, Colorado

**Scott Dennis (2024)**  
Grandville, Michigan

**Diane Trujillo Leavitt (2024)**  
Sammamish, Washington

**Julie Persson (2024)**  
Carrolton, Texas

**Vicky Reier (2024)**  
Arvada, Colorado

**Carl Helfrich (2023)**  
Creve Coeur, Missouri

**Philip Print (2023)**  
Cottage Grove, Minnesota

**Merideth Randles (2023)**  
Seattle, Washington

**Roberto Ghione (2022)**  
Simi Valley, California

**Doris Granberry (2022)**  
Miami, Florida

**Erick Marquez (2022)**  
Montebello, California

**Dwain Tissell (2022)**  
Happy Valley, Oregon

**Cindy Wu (2022)**  
Sugar Land, Texas

**Bryan Murphy (2021)**  
Templeton, California

**David Holder (2021)**  
New Rochelle, New York

**John Stewart (2021)**  
Worthington, Minnesota

**Valerie Thomas (2021)**  
Bethel, Alaska

**Jon Bonkoski (2020)**  
Arden Hills, Minnesota

**Donna Erickson (2020)**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Michael L. Jordan (2020)**  
Kerman, California

As of July 1, 2020, Jenell Pluim and Michael Jordan concluded their terms on the Executive Board. Jon Bonkoski is the new chair, and Cindy Wu has assumed the role of vice-secretary.

# WE TRUST JESUS CHRIST TO GUIDE US AS WE SEEK TO HUMBLY LISTEN AND RESPOND

## *ECC Solidarity Statement*

We affirm that racial inequality continues to exist in our society today. The Evangelical Covenant Church takes seriously our call to practice solidarity with all who are vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed as our biblical witness calls us to do, while paying special attention to the anti-Black racism that has created recent increased trauma and injustice in our nation.

We pledge to support the dismantling of systemic oppression and racism in our communities through listening, prayer, and action. We will practice intentional listening, engagement in corporate and personal prayer to name and repent of the sin of racism, and corporate action through our discipleship pathways across the country and worldwide.

We must continue this work. It is our foremost desire to link arms with our brothers and sisters in order to reflect how precious each person is in God's sight, and we trust Jesus Christ to guide us as we seek to humbly listen and respond.

**JOHN WENRICH**  
President of the Evangelical  
Covenant Church

**PAUL ROBINSON**  
Executive Minister of  
Love Mercy Do Justice

**DOMINIQUE GILLIARD**  
Director of Racial  
Righteousness and  
Reconciliation

**COVENANT OFFICES  
LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**COUNCIL OF  
ADMINISTRATORS**

**COUNCIL OF  
SUPERINTENDENTS**

**ECC MINISTERIUM**

**MOSAIC COMMISSION**

**MARY CHUNG MARCH**  
Chair of the Mosaic  
Commission and President  
of the Covenant Asian  
Pastors Association

**JUANA NESTA**  
President of the Asociación  
Latina de la Iglesia del  
Pacto Evangélico

**T.J. SMITH**  
President of the Indigenous  
Ministers Association

**BRYAN MURPHY**  
President of the African  
American Ministers  
Association

**JENELL PLUIM**  
Chair of the Covenant  
Executive Board

**DAVID HOLDER**  
Vice-Chair of the  
Covenant Executive Board

**JULIE PERSSON**  
Secretary of the  
Covenant Executive Board

**LIZ MOSBO VERHAGE**  
President of the Ministerium

**PETER HEDSTROM**  
President of National  
Covenant Properties

**MARY SURRIDGE**  
President of North Park  
University

**DAVE KERSTEN**  
Dean of North Park  
Theological Seminary and  
Vice President of Church  
Relations for North Park  
University

**ANN WIESBROCK**  
President of Covenant  
Trust Company

**ROGER OXENDALE**  
President of Covenant  
Ministries of Benevolence

**TERRI CUNLIFFE**  
President and Chief  
Executive Officer  
of Covenant Living  
Communities and Services

**MISSION FRIENDS  
FROM THROUGHOUT  
THE GLOBE**



Minneapolis pastors (left to right) Luke Swanson, Edrin Williams, and Mauricio Dell and their congregations stepped in to serve their communities amid protests over George Floyd's death. The September/October issue of the Covenant Companion shares more stories of Covenanters who are loving mercy and doing justice today.





The Evangelical Covenant Church

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